to inform the hon. Member that we have not given any directions. It is their duty and they will do it...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RAM NOHOR RAI... (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the quota fixed for scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the surplus land which is going to be distributed. What is the percentage and names Harijans and Advasi's to whom it has been given...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. SPEAKER: What is the quota fixed for Harijans and Adivasi's?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: There is provision for weaker sections which includes these categories also.

[*English*]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: The hon. Minister has said in her reply that out of 2.16 lakh hectares of land, less than 10,000 hectares of land has been acquired. That comes to 5 per cent of the total surplus land available. Then out of that also for only 4496 hectares of land schemes have been sanctioned. That comes to less than 2.5 per cent of the total area available. This shows, that since 1976 this Act has totally failed. In view of the liberal policy of the Government, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether he will consider to scrap this Act totally since it has not achieved anything what it was intended for. Secondly, this is a Central Act. This is not an Act made by the state governments. So, the central Government has to amend or scrap this Act. What is the Minister's reply to that?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: We will go by the views of the House.

International Treaty on Rights over the Ocean

*389 SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have signed any International Treaty on rights over the Ocean;

(b) if so, the salient feafures thereof;

(c) whether the Government have any plan to explore the sea for natural wealth in the Bay of Bengal,particularly in the sea around the Andaman & Nicobar Islands;

(d) whether any scientific research has been conducted in this regard; and

(e) if so,the results of such research and the possibility for future exploitation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was adopted on 30th April, 1982 and India is a signatory to the Convention. It establishes a comprehensive framework for the regulation of all ocean space. It contains provisions governing inter-alia, the limits of national jurisdiction over ocean space, access to the seas, navigation, protection and preservation of the marine environment, exploitation of living resources and conservation, scientific research, seabed mining and exploitation of other non-living resources and the settlement of disputes.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir.

(e) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

Exploitation of living resources

Exploration and exploitation of living resources in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone which included Bay of Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar Sea is carried out by surveys undertaken by the research and survey vessels of the Department of Ocean

Development, Fisheries survey of Indian and Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. The surveys carried out so far have indicated an annual exploitable potential of marine fish of about 10.9. lakh tonnes in Bay of Bengal and 1.61 lakh tonnes in Andaman and Nicobar seas. The recent trawler survey of fisheries survey of India in Andaman sea located grounds of deep sea spear lobster in exploitable quantity.

2. The future programme includes survey of pelagic resources of Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea and survey of surface swimming tunas of Andaman and Nicobar Islands by oceanic purse seining.

Exploration of Non-Living Resources

3. The Geological Survey of India completed survey for non-living resources in about 63% of Indian exclusive economic zone which covers Bay of Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The survey revealed the following:

(i) Extensive patches of multi-placer sands like ilmenite, rutile, zirocon, monazite in the near shelf domain of Orissa and Andhra coast.

(ii) High grade lime mud off Pentakota in Andhra Pradesh, and

(iii) Indications of anomalous concentration of base metals (copper, lead and zinc) in thin layers in Andaman Sea.

4. The future programmes included search of placer minerals within the territorial waters and geo-chemical sampling for possible sources of categenous hydrocarbon along continental slopes.

5. The Oil and Nautral Gas Commission are offering three of shore blocks in West Bengal and eleven in Andamans in the fourth round of exploration for oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea areas.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have already exhausted the exploration of the minerls in the land and now there is need to exploit more the seabed wealth for the mankind. In view of this whether the International Treaty on Rights Over the Ocean including the equitable distribution of wealth among the developed and developing countries has been taken into consideration and which are the countries who have signed the Treaty? Out of 54 million sq.kms. seabed, what is the area that lies in India?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, the Convention on the Law of the Sea was adopted in 1982 and was signed by 130 countries. But, in order that it might come into force, it is required that at least 60 countries should ratify the convention. Only 49 countries have ratified it as yet. Therefore, the seabed Authority which was envisaged under the Convention has not yet come into being and because of that I must say that all that was envisaged has not become possible internationally. India has also not yet ratified the convention.

About the area, as you know, under the law, we do have the exclusive economic zone and you have certain laws governing the area which is not under us.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Sir, what I wanted to know was whether equitable distribution between the developed and developing countries has got any place in the Treaty?

MR. SPEAKER: It is the common heritage of mankind.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Yes Sir, provided the Convention is ratified by sufficient number of countries and the Seadbed Authority comes into being. Under the Convention,once it comes into being, there are two important provisions. Firstly, 50 per cent of the funding has to be done by the member countries themselves. Secondly, there is provision also for sharing of technologic which is developed by any of the countries, so that the others could benefit from it.

Probably this is the reason why none of the industrialised countries, (seventeen of them,) have not yet ratified this Convention which means there are reservations about sharing both the resources required and the technology developed with the other countries of the world.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Sir, part ii) of my question was not properly replied. The hon. Prime Minister is also here. He can better say the position whether the International Treaty on the right of the Seabed does include the equitable distribution of the seabed wealth between the developing countries and developed countries, whether that has a place in the International Treaty?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO): That is the intention of the convention. It is a different matter that the Convention has not come into force. She has already explained why probably it has not come into force. (*interruptions*)

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. It cannot be allowed like this. You have not utilised your right properly.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Jena, let Shri Bhakta ask the question.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Sir, the Geological Survey of India has undertaken a survey in the sea-beds around Andaman and Nicobar Islands and collected 75 samples within a depth ranging from 500 to 2, 500 metres in the sea-bed and that indicated the availability of copper, lead, zinc and may be gold in the sea-bed around Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In view of this, I would like to know whether the Government will consider opening one office of the Ocean Development Department in Andaman & Nicobar Islands to undertake in depth water study at a depth of more than 2, 500 metres and above in the sea-bed areas around Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

In the reply it has been stated that the oil exploration work would take place and relevant places have been identified for Andaman and Nicobar Islands. I would like to know whether the Government is going to give contracts for this to any foreign company and if that be so, how many firms will be given contracts in Andaman and Nicobar Islands?

SHRIMTI MARGARET ALVA: As far as oil exploration is concerned, I may say that it is off-shore drilling facility. We have no intention, at the moment, of locating any thing in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is only at the exploratory level for which bids have been called for by April, 1992 and the O.N.G.C. would be able to give other details about it.

As far as sea-bed exploration is concerned, most of the work is being done through specialised ships which are surveying and studying the ocean-bed and examining what has been explored. A Centre for Ocean Development has recently opened in a small office in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The provision is there. It will be expanded as and when the time is ripe.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: In our exclusive economic zone non-living materials like Elumanite, Zarcum and Gypsum etc. have been identified to be available in the Bay of Bengal. I understand all these non-living resources have been identified. I would like to ask the hon Minister whether the Government of India is planning to exploit all these resources for national utilisation?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: The resources have now been discovered in certain areas As I said earlier, when we find them to be economically viable to exploit them, the concerned Departments and others will take up the work I may mention, for instance, that this Department does the exploratory work, develops the necessary technology and then the concerned Department, takes up the specific planning and follows it up. For instance, the Atomic Energy Department does have provision for

rare earths. We have plants in Kerala and Tamil Nadu which are already doing this. Therefore, at the moment I would not be able to say who is going to do what.. The exploratory work has been done Certain areas and locations have been identified and follow-up work, work as the technology etc. is to be done. As and when funds and other things become available, it will be exploited commercially.

SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL: Sir, for exploration of the sea-bed research and flora and fauna, way back in 1980-1981 three vessels were purchased at the cost of about Rs. 100 crores and work done by them is not promising. That is what I feel. Whether the Hon. Minister will ask for more funds in the Eighth Five Year Plan for research and survey of the sea-bed and also whether there will be efforts made for getting the signature of fifty per cent countries for finalising the treaty because it is very important for a country like India where there is a Vast sea coast and around Andaman and Nicobar Islands from where we can go further deep, say 450 kilometres,as exclusive economic zone, for survey and exploration and exploitation. I want the details from the hon. Minister,

MR.SPEAKER: The Ministers always ask for more funds from the Finance Minister.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, in the Eighth Plan Rs, 235 cores has been requested for the entire programme and we hope that we will be able to get what we require. As far as the ships that are with us, I mean,with the various departments the Member said that they have not been of much use . But we feel that they have been doing very good work.

SHRI VIJAYA NAVAL PATIL: They have not been utilised properly.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: They have been utilised, Sir. The Fisheries Department has some survey vessels, the Department of Ocean Development has come, the Geological Survey of India has got its own infrastructure, and therefore, they have been used by different departments and they have got their own equipment as per their requirements. Two types of vessels are required, one for the coast and another for deep sea. There are two types of vessels which have been used and we have made provision for improving the infrastructure on this front in the Eighth Plan.

The hon. Member asked if the 50th signature for the ratification would be arranged by us. I want to tell the hon. Member that we require 60 signatures, and not 50 for the convention to come into operation.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of State has informed us that so far as the Convention is concerned, amongst the non-ratifiers and non-signatories to the Convention is India. We have also not ratified the Convention. I would like to understand from the hon. Prime Minister or the hon. Minister of State as to what is holding up of ratification of the Convention.

Further, so far as the E.E.Z. is concerned, the Indian exclusive economic zone had been fully delineated and if we had not fully delineated it, what are the areas where we had not delineated it? For example, the New Moore Island is an area of dispute. Where have we not delineated it and for what reason?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, we have had our reservations also about some of the provisions of the Convention. We have not yet ratified it and as I said, one of them is that once the Treaty is ratified, then all the technology has to be shared among all those who are Members and we are yet developing our own indigenous technology investing our own money; and none of the industrialised countries,. 17 of them, have ratified it, which means that they are also not prepared to share either the funding or the technology which is developed by them. And therefore, unless all of us are prepared to do it together, we feel that there is no point only our rushing

into it ahead of those who really have that technology.

Sir, as far as the demarcation of the Exclusive Economic Zone is concerned, I think we do not have a problem about that. It is the second part of it and that is the Continental shelf which really requires to be mapped to show how much of it really comes under our exclusive control. This work is going on, parts of it have been completed, the rest if it are still under survey.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Sir, my question is regarding the Exclusive Economic Zone of India. From the answer it is clear that there are five agencies which are doing the survey and exploration work- the Department of Ocean Development, Fisheries Surveys, Central Marine fisheries, Geological Survey of India and the Oil and Natural Gas Commission. Five different agencies are doing the survey and exploration work. According to all the indications which are available, our sea beds have a very rich wealth, but we find that we do not have enough capacity and also necessary equipment and organisation to do this exploration work as expeditiously as it is required. Keeping this in view, is the government thinking to have a coordinated department or agency? Secondly, are they going to seek some assistance from foreign agencies where required high technology and equipments are made available for the exploration of this sea-bed wealth?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I will start by answering the last part of it first. For off-shore oil exploration we have called for bids now from international companies which are prepared to come both for the off-shore Andaman and Nicobar Islands as well as for the three blocks on the Bengal coast. These are being offered for international exploration and exploitation with certain conditions which would give the option to us to buy 100% of the crude when it becomes available.

As far as the other exploration is concerned, I can mention that a Working Group was set up by the Ministry of Agriculture for exploration and exploitation of the fish resources. This question is exclusively related to Bay of Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar Islands which has been put. In this area also, Tuna and certain other fish resources like lobsters have been discovered which could be exploited upto the level of 10.9. and 1.3 lakh tonnes annually in these areas which are not yet exploited. That is being done by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Department. We also have, at the same time, other explorations going on, for instance, for demarkating the EEZ and this one is done by the Geological Survey of India. Therefore, as I said in the beginning, there are various agencies attending to different types of work which are going in the off-shore areas which have been undertaken.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YEADAV: Sir, My question regarding the coordinated agency for all these works, has not been answered.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, this is a good suggestion which we would certainly like to consider.

Norms For Allocation of Levy Sugar

*390. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the norms for allocation of levy sugar to the States;

(b) the allocation thereof to each State during the current year, month-wise; and

(c) whether the government propose to fix the levy sugar quota to the States on the basis of population as per census of 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINITERY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI): (a) Under the present policy of partial control, levy sugar allocations to the States are generally made on uniform norms of ensuring 425 gms per capital monthly